

## **MAKING QUALITY PATIENT CARE THE PRIORITY: A CHRONOLOGY OF EFFORTS TO OPEN A NEW MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOSPITAL**

- Dec. 2, 2008** The Board of Supervisors approves a motion by newly-sworn-in Second District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas directing the County's Chief Executive Office to develop a detailed plan to make the Martin Luther King Medical Center (MLKMC) seismic compliant. Supported unanimously by the Board, Chairman Don Knabe publicly stated opening Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital was among the Board's highest priorities. Earlier in the day, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas visited the Willowbrook facility to deliver his first public announcement on efforts to "jump start" the process of restoring full hospital and emergency room services to the area.
- January 12, 2009** The Board of Supervisors receives a report on the final list of major projects likely to qualify for federal economic recovery funding. An estimated \$300 million is included for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Center.
- February 17, 2009** President Barack Obama signs the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) more commonly called "the stimulus," into law. The federal legislation contains extremely favorable bond financing mechanisms that will permit local governments, including the County of Los Angeles, to invest in its capital construction program.
- March 11, 2009** The Board announces that the County has reached an agreement with the University of California (UC) and State of California on a framework for continued discussion that all hoped would lead to the eventual opening of a new Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital as a private, non-profit facility with 120-beds by late 2012, with physician services provided by University of California doctors. The announcement comes eight months after the Board of Supervisors directed L.A. County CEO William T Fujioka to enter into discussions and negotiations with UC system and state officials. CEO Fujioka personally leads the County team in this pursuit, frequently traveling to the Oakland headquarters of the UC system for discussions that included UC Vice President for Health Affairs Jack Stobo, California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary Kim Belshe, Department of Health Care Services Director David Maxwell Jolly and Health Care Advisor to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger Richard Figueroa.
- March 11, 2009** The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is commissioned to analyze existing land use patterns at the 38 acre MLKMC site and make recommendations for future development opportunities. An international organization of professionals spanning a wide range of land use disciplines, ULI was tasked with assembling nationally-recognized experts in a two-day intensive workshop to brainstorm ideas on how to develop the MLKMC site in a way that contributes to neighborhood revitalization. The announcement follows release of a framework for the opening of a new

hospital in cooperation with the University of California and the State of California by late 2012.

- March 17, 2009** CEO Fujioka formally reports to the Board of Supervisors the vision embodied in the County-UC framework to open and establish “a new Martin Luther King Hospital” by late 2012.
- March 18, 2009** The UC Board of Regents hears an informational report from Vice President Jack Stobo regarding the framework. Supervisor Ridley-Thomas writes a letter to the Chair of the UC Board of Regents Committee on Health Services, Sherry Lansing, expressing appreciation for UC’s engagement and pledging his personal commitment to the goal of opening “a new, 120 bed hospital that delivers the highest quality patient care and reinforces a badly frayed safety net.” In his two-page letter, the Supervisor stated, “The matter of health care in L.A. County is urgent.”
- April 7, 2009** The Board approves a request to direct County officials to conduct a feasibility study to create a countywide pilot program to develop a cost-effective and electronically secure exchange of patient medical records. Strategic deployment of health information technology could address the documented higher levels of disease burden, health care demand and difficulties in accessing care in South Los Angeles.
- May 5, 2009** The Board of Supervisors travels to Washington D.C. where they spend two days meeting with Obama Administration officials and members of California’s congressional delegation to seek critically-needed dollars for Los Angeles County. The Supervisors meet with Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and Reps. Lucille Roybal-Allard, Laura Richardson, Diane Watson, Henry Waxman, Xavier Becerra, Maxine Waters, and Jane Harman about the opening of a new Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital, health care reform legislation and health care workforce training programs.
- June 5, 2009** The Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel, chaired by Michael Banner, presents the results of its two-day intensive review of the 38 acre MLK Medical Center site and adjacent land use opportunities. ULI recommends that the property north of the Medical Center be considered for more intensive and strategic development, building on pre-existing education, research, commercial and residential uses and access to transit and freeways. ULI also recommends that the County develop a master plan for the Medical Center campus.
- Aug. 1, 2009** Over 400 participants pack the King-Drew Medical Magnet High School Lecture Hall for two and half hours to hear Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, County CEO Fujioka, the Urban Land Institute’s Michael Banner and Katherine Perez, South LA Healthcare Options Task Force member Dr. Hector Flores, California Endowment Executive Director Dr. Bob Ross, and SEIU (Local 721) Director of Strategic Initiatives Kathy Ochoa discuss the efforts to restore quality in-patient services at the MLKMC

site. The audience hears about other catalytic initiatives aimed at changing health care delivery in South L.A. and the County as a whole.

**Aug. 18, 2009**

The Board considers two items: 1.) granting authorization to proceed with negotiations with University of California representatives, including presenting the County's proposal regarding opening a new Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital at the existing Medical Center site; and 2.) approval of the capital program for construction of new medical facilities pursuant to actions by the Board of Regents at their September meeting.